

Thuggeasy

NEWSLETTER OF THE HOBART COMPUTER USERS GROUP INC.

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CyberSeniors

A word from our esteemed President

You may have noticed the piece in the "Sunday Tasmanian" (14 April) which pointed out that ABS statistics reveal a 38% growth in computer use among 55 – 64 year olds, compared with a mere 9% for adults of all ages.

These "Cyber oldies", as the article called them, are taking up computing to stay in touch with family and friends, and even starting new careers. New computer clubs are being formed under the auspices of the Australian Seniors Computer Clubs Association (<http://www.seniorcomputing.org>), who claim that 50,000 people aged over 50 have already used the clubs to learn about computers and computing.

We already have a computer club. A large percentage of our membership are in this age group. What is stopping us from forming a Special Interest Group (SIG) to cater for seniors in Hobart who want to learn computing?

Is it a lack of equipment? We could easily buy a few secondhand computers and refurbish them and install the appropriate software.

Is it a lack of expertise? Hardly, or we wouldn't be able to produce a newsletter and stage the demonstrations that we do.

Is it a reluctance on the part of the present membership to have new members join us? I certainly hope not.

I propose to put to the Committee that we explore this avenue for expansion of our Group. If you have any thoughts, for or against the idea, please put them forward by phoning or emailing me or our Secretary. See page 2 for phone numbers and email addresses.

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Copy deadline for next issue is May 9, 2002.

Bytes and Pieces

Whither X-Box?

Despite Microsoft's best efforts for a smooth launch, faulty consoles were discovered in Japan, which received its first deliveries in February. Apparently, the faulty consoles scratched the outer edges of discs. According to Microsoft the damage was only cosmetic and did not affect the performance of the games discs concerned.

Rumours are rife that Microsoft is about to drop the X-Box because of poor worldwide sales. However, other gossip has it that Microsoft will not only keep on making the consoles, but is also considering replacing most of the chips with designs of its own. Neither scenario seems likely.

What price StarOffice?

After giving away its office productivity suite for more than two years, Sun Microsystems will begin charging for the software once version 6.0 is released. Sun says the move is being made because they are receiving feedback from potential users that those users would be prepared to use StarOffice if it came with support.

While the "official" StarOffice will be subject to a charge, OpenOffice.org, which offers most of the StarOffice features, will still be available for free download from www.openoffice.org. The major differences between the two products centre on third party additions and, of course, support.

Be off

Unsuccessful computer operating systems vendor Be dissolved its business on 15 March. It had previously sold its operating system, BeOS, to Palm for \$US11 million.

Be's suit alleging anticompetitive practices by Microsoft will continue. Be argues that Microsoft "created exclusive dealing arrangements with PC original

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Coming Meetings

Preliminary advice only. Subject to change without notice.
Check the website <http://thcugi.freewebsites.com>
for the latest information and further details.

May 14, 2002	Windows XP Pro demonstrated by Peter Campbell
May 28, 2002	Senior Librarian Warwick Lee on the subject of library services available via the Internet
June 11, 2002	Problems night and Bring 'N' Buy
June 25 2002	Software demonstration by Peter Campbell. Subject software will be announced later.
July 9, 2002	MS Train Simulator with Karel Hen, subject to confirmation.
July 23, 2002	Computer basics night

The Management Committee invites suggestions for future meetings, guest speakers and demonstrations. Contact Neil Hutton now with your ideas.

General Information

The Hobart Computer Users Group Inc. meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month from January to November and on the second Tuesday in December.

We produces a newsletter monthly, except December/January combined issue, in time for the second meeting of the month.

We also run an email list (hcug-list@southcom.com.au). Members can use the list to seek help, offer items for sale and for general discussion. To subscribe to the list, go to the URL below:

<http://lists.southcom.com.au/mailman/listinfo/hcug-list>

Your subscription request will be acknowledged and you must then-reply to activate the subscription.

We meet at the New Town Senior Citizens Club rooms, 22-28 Creek Road, Lenah Valley (opposite Lenah Valley Primary School).

Doors open at approximately 7.30 pm to allow time to set out the chairs and set up the computer and projector. Meetings begin at 8pm.

An entry fee of \$2 per person applies. However, this includes supper after the meeting.

Visitors are always welcome. Don't come alone. Bring a friend, or two, or three.

Annual subscription is \$25.00 per household per year, payable on 1st July. This entitles the household to one newsletter and one vote.

"Thuggery" is published on the fourth Tuesday each month (except December/January combined issue) and distributed to members, visitors and advertisers. Copies are also exchanged with other user groups in Australia and overseas.

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Advertisers please note:

All advertising copy must reach the Editor by the advertising deadline, or it may be excluded at the discretion of the Editor. We regret the necessity for this, but compliance with deadlines is essential so that the newsletter can be finalised and printed in time for the second meeting each month. Advertising rates and deadlines on application to the Hon. Secretary.

Visit our website at <http://thcugi.freewebsites.com> for back issues, hints, links and more!

Jargon explained

John James, Dell and others demystify the jargon

Cable modem

A modem attached to a coaxial cable television system. Cable modems can transmit data at 500 kilobytes a second, much faster than a typical computer modem, which sends signals over telephone lines. Cable services in Australia are restricted to areas of Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney. Outside those areas, fast Internet services use satellites, or normal landlines with IDSN or ADSL to speed up traffic.

Case sensitive

When it matters if letters are typed in uppercase or lowercase. Some computer programs and network services, especially passwords, are case sensitive: "XYZ" is considered different data than "xyz." Some email users are case sensitive too: It bugs them if they receive messages typed in all CAPITAL LETTERS (it's the visual equivalent to shouting).

Character

A letter of the alphabet, number, space or punctuation mark is a character.

Chat room

A site on the World Wide Web where any number of computer users can type in messages to each other (chat) in real time, creating an online conversation. These messages usually appear on an area of the screen next to the user's nickname or handle. Most chat rooms have a particular topic (which you are expected to discuss) but there are some that are purely for meeting other people. This includes IRC.

Clicks

A term used in the online advertising industry, it refers to the number of times a user presses their mouse button on an ad banner. This term is also used to describe the number of Web pages a person must go through (by pressing a mouse button) in order to reach a certain destination, as is the case when used in a sentence like "It's three clicks in".

cm [centimeter]

A metric unit of measure equal to one hundredth of a metre or 0.39 inch. By definition, an inch is 2.54 cm exactly.

cm/sec

Centimeters per second.

CMOS

(Combined Metal Oxide Semiconductor; pr. "see-moss") A special type of memory which retains its data when the PC is switched off, used to store settings for things like what type of hard disk you have, and how much memory. The settings are accessed via the BIOS.

CMYK

(Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, Key-stone black) The standard four colours used by most printers - almost any colour can be created out of these. See also RGB.

Codec

(Compressor/DECompressor) A small piece of computer code that tells the computer how to decode particular types of information, usually video files. If your video player won't

Bytes and Pieces

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equipment makers prohibiting the sale of PCs with multiple pre-installed operating systems".

No sale of PGP

Network Associates has shelved plans to sell its PGP products business because they say that they cannot find a buyer willing to pay the asking price.

The inventor of PGP (Pretty Good Privacy), Phil Zimmerman, remains confident that it will go on. Zimmerman sold PGP to Network Associates in 1997. However, the protocols for the encryption code are open to all on the Internet. Perhaps that's why no-one is prepared to pay a big price.

Blue laser

Sanyo has developed a new type of blue laser for use on future optical discs.

To get more data on to a given sized disc it is necessary to pack it more densely. This requires the use of shorter wavelengths so that the spot the laser beam makes becomes smaller. Current DVD lasers use red light between 630 and 800 nanometres in wavelength, but blue light lasers are around 405 nanometres.

Unlike existing blue lasers, which are produced on a substrate of sapphire, Sanyo has managed to produce a device based on gallium nitride. This, Sanyo claims, will make it cheaper and easier to produce.

Broadband Advisory Group

The Federal government has announced the establishment of a

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Broadband Advisory Group that will involve consultation with industry and will be used as a basis for government policy.

However, IT Minister, Senator Richard Alston, has rejected criticism that this move is "too little, too late". He said that it was not solely the governments responsibility to fund the roll-out of broadband in Australia. He also said that roll-outs funded by governments overseas had proved expensive white elephants with poor take-up rates.

Amazon settles

After more than two years, Amazon.com has settled its patent-infringement suit against rival Barnesandnoble.com over the use of its one-click system.

Amazon.com's one-click system allows repeat customers to place orders without having to re-enter credit card and address information. It began offering the system in 1997 and was granted a patent for it two years later. In October 1999 it sued Barnesandnoble.com for patent infringement.

Details of the settlement have not been reported.

0.09 micron chips

Currently computer chips are produced using a 0.13 or 0.18 micron process. Now three companies have jointly produced SRAM chips using a prototype 0.09 micron process.

The three companies are Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. (TSMC), Philips and STMicroelectronics (ST).

The 0.09 micron process is

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play a particular format, you can usually download and install a codec which will tell it how from the internet.

Configure

To change software or hardware actions by changing their settings. Configurations can be set or reset in software or manipulated by changing hardware jumpers, switches or other elements to personalize or increase the computer's efficiency.

Connect

To get online, or to make the connection with an Internet Service Provider (ISP).

Control Panel

A utility that allows you to modify operating system and hardware settings, such as display settings. To access the Control Panel, click the Start button on the Windows® desktop, point to Settings, and then click Control Panel.

Controller

Chips that control the transfer of data between the microprocessor and memory or between the microprocessor and devices

cps (Characters Per Second)

A measure of how quickly information, particularly text, is being transferred over a modem link or network. See also bps.

CPU

Central Processing Unit - Look for the most powerful microprocessor chip in your computer, and that'll be the CPU. The CPU handles the central management functions of a high-powered PC and Mac, respectively. Sometimes the term CPU is used to

describe the whole box that contains the chip along with the motherboard, expansion cards, disk drives, power supply, and so on. Both uses are widespread, but only the first is really accurate.

Crash

When a computer program or operating system stops working completely or almost completely it (or the computer) is said to have "crashed". When a computer crashes it usually needs to be rebooted before it can be used again. See also lockup.

CRT [Cathode Ray Tube]

The imaging technology used in most desktop monitors. Provides an excellent colour display, but is extremely bulky and is now being gradually supplanted by TFT.

CSS [Cascading Style Sheets]

A set of HTML commands used to control the style of web pages, more complex than the tag-set it is intended to replace, but also more powerful and particularly useful for retaining a uniform style across a large website. Generally only used by professional web designers.

Cursor

The marker on a display or screen that shows where the next keyboard or mouse action will occur. It often is a blinking solid line or an underline character. In a graphic program, the cursor may be a small arrow.

Cyberspace

A term coined by author William Gibson in his novel "Neuromancer". Cyberspace is currently used to refer to the digital world constructed by computer networks, in particular the Internet.

Data

Any information created by a user, such as documents, pictures or sounds.

Database

A program used for organising any kind of information on a computer into a searchable form, anything from a list of contacts to a complex stock control system.

DDR (Double Data Rate)

A very fast type of RAM for a PC, mostly used on some high performance graphics cards.

Default

A default setting is one you haven't changed - what a program will do (or use) if you don't tell it any different. "Accept the defaults" means leave any settings as they are.

Desktop

A computer designed to sit on a desk (as opposed to a laptop). The window that appears when you start Windows®.

Device

Hardware such as a disk drive, printer, or keyboard that is installed in or connected to your computer.

Device driver

Software that allows the operating system to control a device such as a printer, scanner, modem or video card. Many devices will not work properly if the correct device driver is not installed in the computer. It is important to choose the right driver for your version of the operating system. You may need new drivers if you change versions. For example, if you upgrade from Windows 98 to Windows XP.

DIMM [Dual In-line Memory Module; pr. "dim"]

A module of RAM for a PC, replacing the older SIMM specification on new computers.

Directory

A place to organise or group files on a disk. See folder.

Disk

Generic term for a type of storage device, such as a hard disk or a floppy disk (diskette). So called because the important part, where the information is actually stored, is circular, although you can't see it because it is hidden away inside a protective shell.

DMA [direct memory access]

A channel that allows certain types of data transfer between RAM and a device to bypass the microprocessor.

DRAM [dynamic random-access memory]

Memory that stores information in integrated circuits containing capacitors.

Driver

See device driver.

DVD [digital versatile disc]

A disc usually used to store movies. DVDs are double-sided, whereas CDs are single-sided. DVD drives read most CD media as well. Some can also write CDs. These are becoming increasingly common in laptop computers.

[Continued next month]

Bytes and Pieces

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expected to be used to produce chips for a range of applications including mobile handsets.

The new process should produce faster chips that generate less heat and consume less power than existing chips. The heat and power consumption reductions are particularly important for small battery operated devices.

The group expect to produce 0.065 micron chips roughly two years after the introduction of the 0.09 micron ones, prototype production of which is expected to begin in the second half of this year.

0.05 microns anybody?

Meanwhile, IBM, Sony and Toshiba have got together to develop technology that will eventually produce 0.05 micron chips. These will be based on IBM's silicon-on-insulator and other material advances.

It would seem that over the next few years, processors will become faster, use less electricity and produce less heat.

ADSL 74%

According to Telstra, ADSL broadband Internet services are now available to 74% of Australian homes.

Users hook into the broadband network, which uses the same copper wires as your phone service, using a special modem and filter.

The service is called ADSL (Asynchronous Digital Subscriber Line) because the upload speed is slower than the download speed. As most users download more than they send out, this asynchronous arrangement works well.

T

Bobbie's best

Hints, tips and suggestions from Bob Curran

Save typing

Most of the time, your Web browsing takes you to Web addresses that look something like this: <http://www.something.com>. Next time you want to visit, say, www.google.com, go to your Address box at the top of your browser, type "google", and then hold down the Ctrl key and press Enter. The word "google" magically transforms into www.google.com and your browser takes you to your destination.

Email attachments

An attachment is a file you send along with an e-mail message. Sending an attachment is like adding a separate document to a letter. Outlook Express uses a paper clip icon to indicate that a message has an attachment, and the button you click to add an attachment sports a paper clip design also.

Here is the procedure for adding an attachment to an outgoing message in Outlook Express.

Click the Attach button. The Insert Attachment dialogue box appears. Browse through the folders on your hard drive until you find the file you want to insert. When you find the file you want to attach, click the filename to select it.

Click Attach. The file is inserted into the message as an attachment. An icon for the attachment appears on a special Attach line that is inserted beneath the Subject field in the message header.

Finish the message and then click the Send button. Finish typing the message and then click Send to send the message on its

way.

The attach button in Eudora looks like two pieces of paper held together by a paper clip. When you click on it, or on Message/Attach file, the procedure is the same as just outlined.

Saving those messages.

Before you start saving important Outlook Express messages, you would be wise to create some additional folders to save the messages in. You can create a folder for personal messages and a folder for business messages, or anything you have in mind.

To create a new folder, follow these steps:

Click Local Folders on the Outlook Express folders list. Choose File, Folder, New Folder. The Create Folder dialogue box appears.

Type a name for the new folder. For example, type "Personal Items". Click OK.

The new folder is visible in the folder tree on the left side of the Outlook Express window.

After you create a folder for your messages, moving a message to the folder is easy. Just follow these steps:

In the Inbox, position the mouse pointer over the message you want to move. Click and hold the left mouse button down, and while holding the left button down, drag the message to the folder in which you want it stored.

Release the mouse button when the mouse pointer is over the folder to which you want to move the message. The folder is highlighted when you move the mouse pointer over it. When you release the mouse button, Outlook Express moves the message to the folder you selected and deletes the message from the Inbox folder.

In Eudora these folders are called "mailboxes". The top mailbox is

called "Eudora". Click on it and then follow the procedures outlined to create additional mailboxes and transfer messages to them.

Setting Outlook Express toolbar

As with most Microsoft applications, you can customise the Outlook Express 5.0 toolbar so that it contains only the buttons you really use. With the toolbar visible on the screen, right-click an area free of buttons and choose Customize. In the window on the left, you'll see available unused buttons; on the right, you'll see those that are currently in use. Select a button in either window and click Add or Remove. Choose Close to finish or Reset to restore your toolbar to its original settings.

Eudora offers a similar customisation with the Categories on the left and the buttons on the right. It does not show, however, which buttons are already in use.

Printing Web pages.

Many of the Web sites that you visit in the course of your travels, use frames as a way to divide your browser window into separate panes, each displaying content from different HTML documents.

Using Internet Explorer, when you print a Web page that uses frames, the Print dialogue box (accessed by choosing File, Print or pressing Ctrl+P) gives you options for printing frames. Explore these options to find the one you need.

To print only one frame, you can also right click on the frame and choose Print.

T

Wandering the Web with Ted

Ted Martin suggests some websites to visit



A dictionary of slang

This UK site is great for definitions of slang words and phrases with a UK slant: <http://www.peevish.co.uk/slang/index.htm>.

Enigma

You may have seen the film Enigma, which to my mind is nowhere near as interesting as the recent two-part TV series Station X. Home to the first programmable computer Colossus and wartime home of the computer pioneer Alan Turing, Bletchley Park was the site of vital codebreaking work during World War II. The official site is <http://www.bletchleypark.org.uk/> and another good site is <http://www.fortunecity.com/emachines/e11/86/stationx.html>.

Anyone for more cricket ?

Try <http://www.baggygreen.com.au> which will direct you to the Australian Cricket Board website. As you would expect, there are player profiles, match scores, match calendar (home and international) and of course no sporting site would be complete without a shop.

Ricky Thomas Ponting

Born: 19 December 1974, Launceston, Tasmania

Major Teams: Australia, Tasmania.

Known As: Ricky Ponting

Pronounced: rickee ponting

Batting Style: Right Hand Bat

Bowling Style: Right Arm Medium, Right Arm Off Break



Goodbye Queen Mother

Say farewell by visiting the Royal Family website (<http://www.royal.gov.uk>).

I can just remember seeing the funeral train carrying the coffin of King George V from London to Windsor, and that was a very long time ago!

Tally me banana ?

Want to know what the specials are at Salamanca Market or Bellerive? Their website (<http://www.freshfruit.com.au>) is under development. Times of opening are also listed.



GOLDEN BANANAS
\$2.35 PER KILO

T

Computer security

Some notes from last month's presentation by Peter Campbell

Viruses, worms and trojans

Ever since "Brain" was planted in the boot sector of a 5¼ inch disk as some sort of advertising stunt, computer users have had to cope with applications which spread themselves. Some wreak havoc, while others are more benign. Experts categorise them as viruses, worms and trojans, depending on their behaviour. However, for the purposes of this article, I'll just call them viruses.

Sources

Initially, viruses spread via disks. If you allowed your kids to bring home a disk from school or college and put it in your computer without first scanning it, it was only a matter of time before your computer was infected.

When Microsoft designed Office macros, they opened up another way for viruses to enter your computer. Embedding the macros in documents made it harder for antivirus software writers to detect and clean out any viruses.

Email attachments provided yet another way in. By attaching executable files to emails, virus writers can get people to unwittingly execute the virus program thereby infecting their computer. Once a computer is infected by a virus, the virus may send itself automatically to all, or some, of the addresses in the email programs address book. This is particularly true of Outlook and Outlook Express, which have been used in this way for

some time. However, users of other email programs can no longer assume that they won't distribute viruses in this way. Recently viruses have been found that target address books in Eudora and elsewhere.

Files downloaded from Warez sites, or individuals personal sites are also a potential source of infection.

Cable, ISDN and ADSL systems which put your computer permanently on line make it even more vulnerable.

Defences

With thousands of viruses being written every year, it is not enough to install antivirus software and trust it to take care of any that come your way. You **must** update it regularly. The better antivirus software companies issue updates every few days.

Choose antivirus software that screens macros, email and downloaded files.

Scan all files from time to time for extra surety, especially if a virus is detected

Disks are still a potential source and you should scan all removable media that have come from elsewhere to ensure they are clean.

Turn off macros, or, at least, respond negatively to any queries about macros unless you are sure they are safe.

Never open email attachments that you did not expect to receive, no matter who they appear to be from. Check with the sender if you think the attachment may be genuine but are unsure.

Use a firewall, if you spend long periods online, or have a permanent connection.

Hoaxes

Virus myths, hoaxes and urban myths

Some people don't bother with programming their own viruses because they have found they can cause havoc by having you do their dirty work for them. They send out a message and have the recipients send it on.

How to identify

Such messages purportedly warn of new devastating viruses for which there is no protection and ask you to send the message on to everyone you know.

The messages try to persuade rather than inform.

They cite well-known organisations, such as IBM, Microsoft, CNN or even the FBI.

If you read them closely you may find a hint of leg-pulling.

The author of the message may use lots of exclamation marks and capital letters.

It is usually impossible to tell who the original sender was – they have been forwarded to so many people. (Watch for a long list of addresses at the top of the message.)

Implications if you believe them

What then is the point of the message being sent in the first place? Well, if you are silly enough to send it on to the people you know, and every-

one else who receives it does likewise, then email systems around the world can quickly become clogged and this is what the originator is trying to achieve.

What to do when you receive one

Don't send on any message

that asks you to do so.

If the message claims to quote an authoritative source, check the website of that source to see if they have, in fact, issued a warning.

Go to an antivirus site and look up the subject of the message, or the name given to the alleged virus. If it is a hoax, you will find a note about it, unless, of course, you have discovered a previously unreported one. If it is not a hoax, you will find information about the virus, what damage it can do and how to deal with it. Either way you will know what to do about it.

Eliminating such hoaxes is a matter of education.

Notify the immediate sender that the message they have sent you is nothing more than a hoax and suggest that they follow the procedure just outlined next time they feel tempted to fill your email box with such rubbish.

Be polite, but not too polite. Let them sense that you don't appreciate receiving this type of message, as it is far too easy for people to hit the Forward button and send on messages without thinking whether the recipients need to receive them.

However, don't be downright rude or they may just trash your email without getting the message about hoaxes.

Unauthorised access

Via the Internet

Hackers use a variety of methods, such as scanning for open ports and password cracking programs, to penetrate computers and either take control or syphon off valuable information, such as credit card numbers, Internet account information etc. Sometimes they do malicious damage, other times they may just leave a message that they have been there.

Defences

Make your computer "invisible" to scanners and resistant to attempts to access it without authorisation by using a firewall.

This is particularly important if you use ADSL with its constant connection, or spend long periods on the Internet.

ZoneAlarm has a free version suitable for most home users, and a Pro version if you require more protection.

Disable file sharing. File sharing lets networked computers pass documents back and forth, but may also allow strangers to steal your files over the Internet. If you must enable it, use passwords.

Patch holes as soon as patches are released.

Display file extensions so that you can see ones that may be a virus.

Configure your browser and email program so that are more secure.

Direct access

If other people have access to your computer, they can carry out malicious acts. It may be deliberate, or they may unthinkingly do something, such as loading an infected disk without realising it.

Defences

Only allow trusted people access to your computer.

Insist all disks be scanned.

Supervise children at all times.

Use software to secure your computer.

Spyware

Spyware reports information about your computer or your use of the computer to another party.

The programs are implanted on your computer, often with your approval, though you may not realise exactly what you are approving. These programs feed data on your browsing habits to advertisers, allegedly so that they can better target the adverts they subject you to. In practice they may sell the information on to others.

Consequences

When the information is used for purposes other than that which you may have agreed to, it is an invasion of your privacy. It may bring increased spam. It increases upload traffic, which incurs a per megabyte charge on ADSL systems if you exceed your monthly quota.

Defences

Be alert to what you are approving. Advertising-sup-

ported software usually includes this type of spyware. Look for free programs that are not advertising-supported, or buy software to avoid the advertising.

Use Ad-aware and ZoneAlarm in combination.

Ad-aware detects and eliminates spyware.

ZoneAlarm blocks it from connecting with the Internet.

Privacy

Passwords

The normal password that Windows asks for as it boots up, only governs the layout of the screen and other user configurable aspects of Windows. It can be by-passed simply by choosing Cancel. It does not therefore protect against unauthorised use of the computer.

However, major office suites allow you to password protect your documents. It is this protection that you need to use to maintain privacy.

Encryption

Some office suites encrypt password protected documents, in an effort to stop people reading them without the password.

If yours doesn't, you need to look at additional software that will give you this ability.

Try www.download.com to see what is available.

Software

PGP is useful for encrypting email.

Chameleon encrypts files.

System Lock prevents unauthorised people from using your computer.

There are other programs which hide and/or encrypt

folders on your computer so that unauthorised people cannot find them.

Data security

Backups

You have heard it many times and, possibly, just as often ignored it – "If you don't backup important documents and irreplaceable files, you will lose them!" As Steven Walbution of New Rainbow Publications wrote in 1990, "Remember to backup everything you place on a hard disk. They can crash at any time..."

The advice may not be new, but it's true, nonetheless.

Today we don't have to backup the hard drive to floppy disks. Instead you can use Zip®, LS120/240, CDRW, tape and even removable hard drives.

Choose suitable backup software and your backup drive and media and do it now and do it often.

Backups can be full, incremental, or differential.

Make a full backup every so often.

Make incremental or differential backups of changes between full backups.

Store backups separately from the computer, preferably on different premises.

Software

(See Download Delights "Back Again LE" for suitable software or use Iomega's Backup software if you are using a Zip disk.

Iomega's QuikSync will automatically backup changes to a nominated folder on to a Zip disk every ten minutes. Install it, slip a Zip disk in the drive whenever you are creating documents that will be saved

in that folder and it will ensure that you have a recent backup.

Reversion tools

Windows Me has a System Restore that lets you roll the system back when there is a malfunction. This can only be done, however, if you can at least boot Windows into Safe Mode.

GoBack software runs prior to Windows and allows you to do a system restore even if Windows won't boot. Unlike most of the software mentioned in this article, it is commercial software. However, it is well worth the price.

Physical security

Household security

Finally, don't neglect normal household security and insurance.

Fully insure your computer. All the special software is useless if you have no computer to run it on.

Make sure you have deadlocks on doors and windows and that they are locked when you are not home. In some areas, it may be desirable to fit bars over large windows so that they cannot be used for removing goods.

Install an monitored alarm system.

Join Neighbourhood Watch.

Make the house looked lived in while you are out or away. Use lights and radios on timers, have the junk mail cleared away, leave curtains and blinds partly open, don't leave tools that could be used for a break-in lying around etc.

You should also consider a securing cable for your computer to make it more difficult for a thief to remove it.

T

Yahoo Chat

Some notes from last month's presentation by Neil Hutton

Yahoo is best

My experience with Yahoo Chat started about twelve months ago. I have found it to be as easy a program to use as anyone could expect.

Personally I like to use it rather than MSN Messenger Service or ICQ or any of the other chat programs about today.

I have used ICQ and also MSN Messenger and so far have got out of ICQ and I am thinking seriously about getting out of MSN Messenger.

The only reason for me to keep this going at the present moment is that I have one friend that hasn't got Yahoo.

Make friends

I have found that this is a really great way to make new friends. I have made such wonderful friends over the past twelve months and I can keep in touch with them for the cost of a local phone call. This is just to dial up my ISP.

The greatest advantage of the chat program is that you can chat to almost anywhere in the world and for as long as you like for as I said the cost of just one phone call.

I have now some really great and wonderful friends in many different places such as the USA, Scotland, New Zealand, India, Indonesia, Canada, and of course all over Australia.

I'm online

Right at the moment of preparing this article a female friend from the USA just said hello to me on Chat.

The reason is that I have been

online checking my emails, and as soon as I go online, Yahoo Messenger Service realizes that I am online so it starts up its program automatically.

Kathy

This person has become an extremely special friend both to me and to my wife Kathy. We first made contact with each other about eight months ago.

My wife, Kathy, will even now and then sit at the keyboard and say hello to her, which is somewhat of a rare occurrence, as she doesn't like to chat on the computer much.

My lovely friend's name is Kathy Smith. She has a son, Jarred, who is 7 years old. She is from Melbourne,



Florida, which is exactly one hour east from the city of Orlando.

The best thing about Kathy is that she really is a lovely person to chat to, whether via the keyboard or by voice. This picture is the picture that appears on her profile on the Yahoo Chat site.

(This is Kathy age 31.)

Who's dat knocking?

Once you have made friends with some of the other users of Yahoo Messenger and have placed them on your list of contacts they know exactly when you go online.

You will also know when they come online by the sound of a knock on the door. This is when you can start to receive instant messages from your long distance friends and when they go offline you hear the sound of a door closing with a squeak.

It really is that simple. You can also send messages to your friends who are on your contact list even when they are not online.

This leaves a message for them, which they will receive next time they log on to use Yahoo Chat.

Voice chat

If you have a microphone, you will need to set up the Yahoo audio set up test. This will allow you to see if you are able to use your microphone in this program and, if you can, you then can go voice chat, which makes it even easier to use, this is because you do not have to constantly type your messages to each other.

And the best thing with this is the fact that you can tell if the person you are chatting with is really male or female instead of relying on their profiles.

Where to get it

You can download a copy of this

program from <http://www.yahoo.com>. All you need to look for is Yahoo Messenger. And just follow the prompts to install.

Once you have downloaded a copy of the program and followed the prompts as to set it up, it will ask you to set up a user name and profile.

Profiles

This profile contains your personal information such as your name, location, age, sex (whether male or female that is!), occupation, your favourite saying, your favourite website and anything else that you would like to put on it.

It really is a great way to make good friends, and for the single person, it can be a great way of maybe meeting that someone special.

Shared interests

With this program, no matter what you are interested in, there may be a group somewhere worldwide that has the same interest as you.

I am interested in philately, and there is roughly 20 to 30 groups on Philately on Yahoo that you can join in with and find out different things about other collectors or anything you want to know about it.

The chat rooms that you are able to join are many. They come in all different topics, such as region or area you live in, country, religion, politics, sport, food, cooking, photography and basically anything else that you may be interested in.

There really is such a wide variety of rooms to join in with. You can even create a room of your own. And invite others to join with you in conversation.

sent MPEG, JPEG, PPS, and PPT files to friends in Victoria quite a few times this way and it really is surprising just how fast it is to send them off



this way.

For those members who were at the meeting when I did my little demonstration on this program, this is my friend, Nicola, from Sydney.

Greetings from Canada

I just thought I would refresh the memories of those at the meeting. Brad from British Columbia, Canada whom we spoke to at the time and Nicola both send their best wishes and greetings to you all.

Sorry you missed it

And to all of those others who missed out on it, it was a great night. Since the demonstration, I have had quite a few others on my contacts' list who have said that they would have taken part if they had have known about it. Perhaps, we should take another look at the subject some time soon.

Software

In addition to Yahoo Messenger, you might like to try Trillian Messenger using your Yahoo account. According to their website <http://www.trillian.cc>:

Trillian is everything you need for instant messaging. Connect to ICQ®, AOL Instant Messenger(SM), MSN Messenger, Yahoo! Messenger and IRC in a single, sleek and slim interface.

Trillian is freeware, but the makers do invite donations to help with further development.


Etiquette

When you are invited into another user's room, you have to abide by their rules or no rules as the case may be. some of the rules may have to do with not chatting about politics, religion or other topics that they don't want to hear anything about.

File exchange

You can also send files and anything else that you would like to via File Transfer as long as the party to whom you are sending it is online and they are willing to accept it. This only takes a few seconds.

I personally have



Basic Product List

We can supply a vast range of supplies for your home and small business computer users. Best prices given to members of the Hobart Computer Users Group Inc. who identify themselves when purchasing. Even if you only try us for items that others cannot, or will not, supply, we will use our best endeavours to do so. Combined with friendly and personal service, you will be pleasantly surprised.

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Download delights

Software for chatting and computer security recommended by Peter Campbell

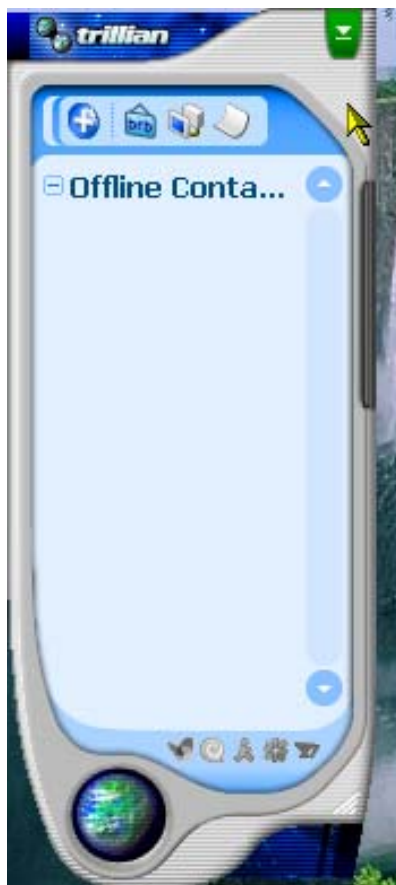
Chat

As Neil Hutton says in his article, he has found Yahoo Chat more to his taste than some of the other chat programs. You can download it from <http://www.yahoo.com>.

If, however, you are looking for a chat client that you can use with all the various services then Trillian is worth a look.

Despite AOL's lack of co-operation and frequent internal changes, Trillian works with MSN, AIM, ICQ, IRC and Yahoo.

You will need to be set up on as many of these as you wish to use, but, as far as I can see – being a non-chat person – it is simple to set up and use. Take a look at it, especially if you use more than one of the messenger services.



Ad-Aware

Steve Gibson of Gibson Research became concerned about the programs that advertising-supported applications implanted on your computer to monitor your browsing and wrote a small utility to let you remove such programs. When Ad-Aware was released, he ceased development of his utility and now recommends Ad-Aware instead.

Ad-Aware not only lets you choose which programs you allow to monitor your activities, but also allows you to remove them all and then restore any that are necessary for the proper operation of your advertising-supported applications.

AVG

The biggest threat to your computer's security is undoubtedly the prevalence of viruses, trojans and worms. Many of these are distributed as attachments to email and some are cunningly disguised in an effort to get you to open the attachment.

After looking at some other antivirus programs, I recommend AVG from <http://www.grisoft.com>. Not only are regular updates available, but they install automatically once downloaded.

AVG claims its software is regularly subjected to independent testing to ensure it is 100% effective.

Back Again LE

There are only two kinds of computer users: Those who have lost files and data and those who are going to. Back it up or lose it!

Back Again LE allows you to select what you want to back up and what media you want to use for the backup. It provides a choice of backups and comes with a comprehensive

manual on disk.

It supports all types of tape drive with no additional device driver, floppy disks, Zip, SyQuest, and hard disk drives. If you use DirectCD, you can also use CDRW disks in a CD burner. And the program is free for personal use.

I downloaded my copy from <http://www.tudogs.com>.

System Lock

The best way I know to keep people from sitting down at your computer and fiddling with things they have no business fiddling with is a software program called "System Lock" from www.r2.com.au.

If you have a keyboard lock you could use that instead, but many computers these days don't have one.

Zone Alarm

If you spend a lot of time on the Internet, or have a permanent connection, your computer will be scanned by hackers looking for a target. If your computer does not respond to the scan and you have software in place that prevents unauthorised programs from accessing it, you stand a very good chance of not being hacked.

The software that does this is called a firewall and one of the best free firewalls according to Steve Gibson is Zone Alarm.

I tried a number of others but found this easiest to install and configure. Judging by the number of warning notices that pop up when an unauthorised attempt at access is detected, it does an effective job.

There is a free version and a Pro version which you can buy. For more details see <http://www.zonelabs.com>.

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Neil's nonsense

Some more humour from Neil Hutton

Go for coffee

Freddie was eighteen years old, friendly, and eager to do things right. Unfortunately, he wasn't especially bright. He had just started his first job, as a delivery boy and general go-fer at a furniture warehouse. His first task was to go out for coffee.

He walked into a nearby coffee shop carrying a large Thermos flask. When the counterman finally noticed him, he held up the Thermos.

"Is this big enough to hold six cups of coffee?" he said. The counterman looked at the Thermos, hesitated for a few seconds, then finally said, "Yeah. It looks like about six cups to me."

"Good," Freddie said. "Give me two regular, two black, and two decaf."

Women drivers

Driving to the office this morning on the Interstate, I looked over to my left and there was a woman in a brand new Mustang doing 65 miles per hour with her face up next to her rear view mirror putting on her eyeliner! I looked away for a couple sec-

onds and when I looked back she was halfway over in my lane, still working on that makeup!!!

It scared me so bad, I dropped my electric shaver, which knocked the donut out of my other hand. In all the confusion of trying to straighten out the car using my knees against the steering wheel, it knocked my cell phone away from my ear which fell into the coffee between my legs, splashed and burned Big Jim and the Twins, ruined the damn phone and disconnected an important call!

Damn women drivers!!!!!!

Designated driver

A cop is staking out a bar for drunk drivers. At closing time, he sees a guy stumble out of the bar, trip on the curb, and fumble for his keys for five minutes. When he finally gets in, it takes him another five minutes to get the key in the ignition.

Meanwhile, everybody else leaves the bar and drives off. When he finally pulls away, the cop is waiting for him, pulls him over, and gives him a Breathalyzer test. The test

shows he has a blood alcohol level of 0.0.

The cop says, "How is this possible?"

The guy says, "Tonight I'm the designated decoy."

Unfaithful wife

A husband goes to a shrink and says, "Doctor, you've got to help me. My wife is unfaithful to me. Every Friday night, she goes to Larry's bar and picks up men. In fact, she sleeps with anybody who asks her! I'm going crazy. What do you think I should do?"

"Relax," says the doctor, "take a deep breath and calm down. Now, tell me, where exactly is Larry's bar?"

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